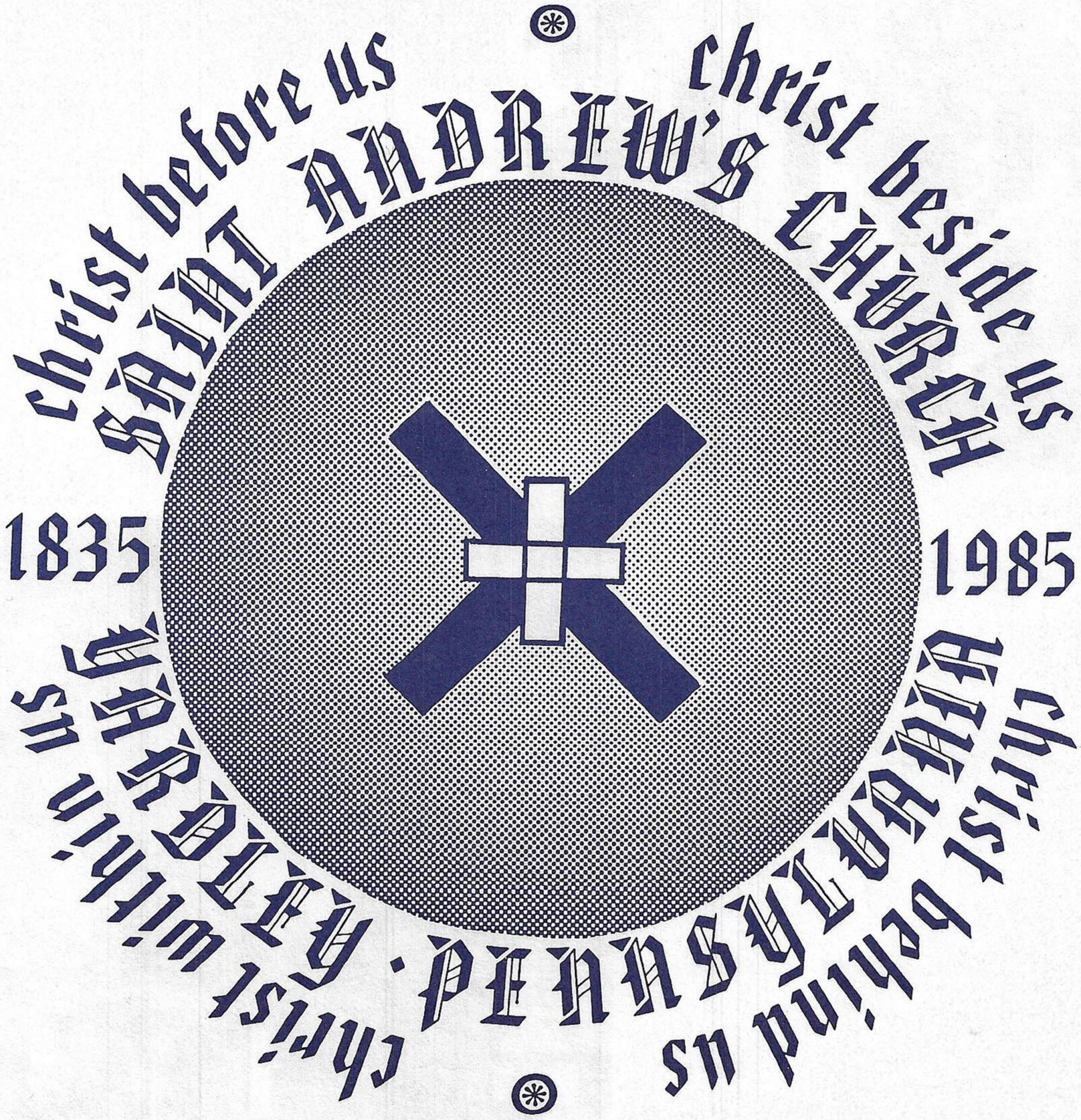
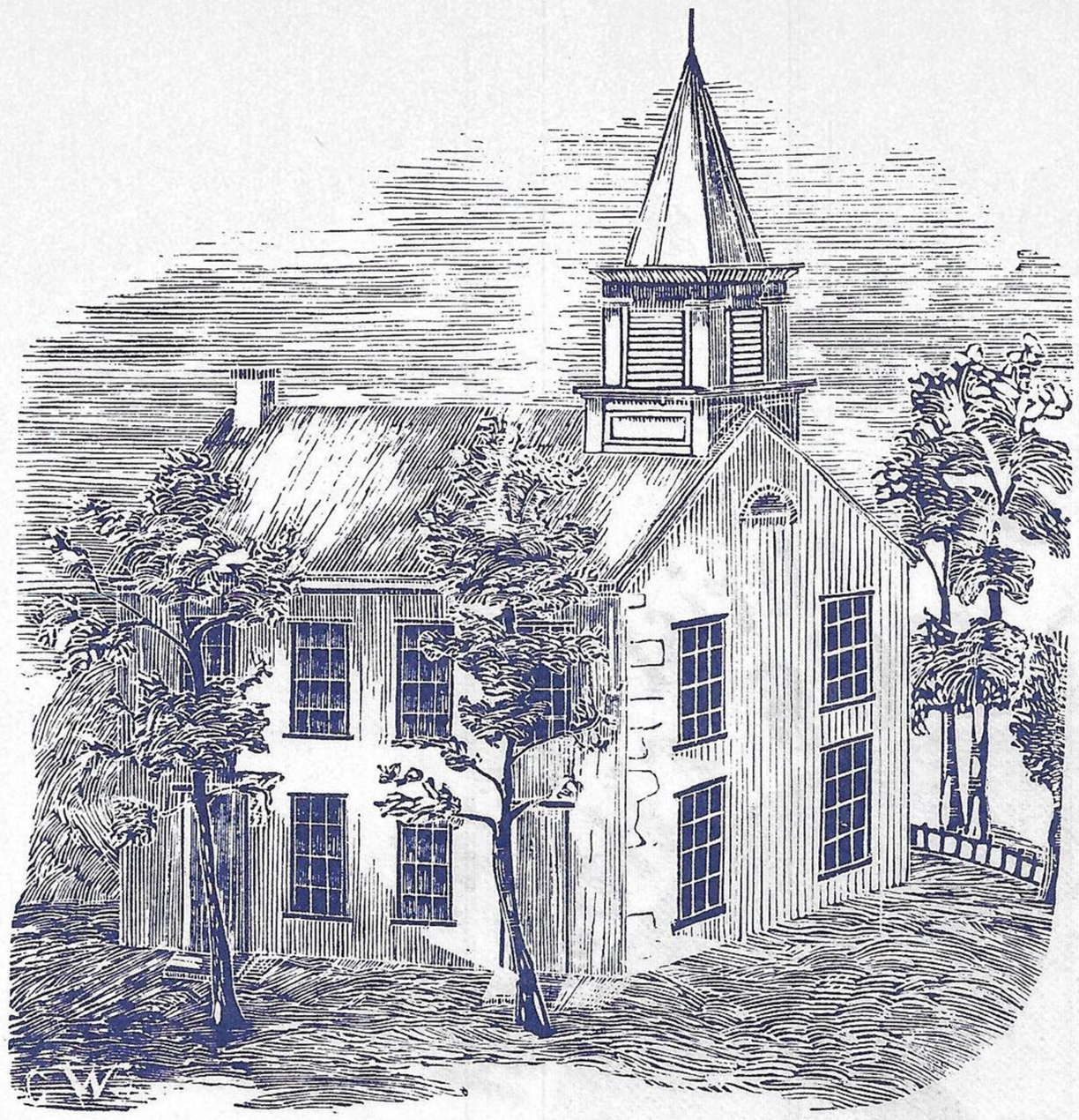



# AN INFORMAL HISTORY



This informal history of St. Andrew's Church is based on available records and the recollections of parishioners. If you have materials or memories from the past of St. Andrew's, please share them with the rector so that we may maintain additional historical information. Your help is invited !


St Andrew's Episcopal Church

West Afton Avenue

Yardley, Pa. 19067

(215) 493-2636

# Our Community Church

Only a little is known today concerning the origin of St. Andrew's Church. What we do know is that the original building on the present site of the church was built in 1827 to provide a place of Protestant worship in the community then known as Yardleyville. That church was known as the Union Meeting House.

A picture of that first church was taken in 1889, and found among the possessions of Mr. Thomas C. Knowles. It is believed that only minor exterior changes had been made since the structure was built in 1827. The building was of stone, quarried nearby in a now abandoned quarry on land today known as Sandy Run II. It appears that Mr. Courtlandt Yardley or Mr. Edward Nicholson, Sr., gave a part of the land, now used by St. Andrew's, for building the Union Meeting House and a portion of the adjacent cemetery.

In 1832, the only Episcopal church in Bucks County was St. James the Greater, Bristol, which was established in 1712. The Rev. Mr. Greenberry W. Ridgely was the "missionary rector" in the service of the Society for the Advancement of Christianity in Pennsylvania. In addition to duties in Bristol, his field included Hulmeville, Newtown and Yardleyville. The leaders of the Union Meeting House applied to this neighboring priest for help in 1832.

Only 50 years earlier, the Protestant Episcopal Church of the United States had been established, independent of the Church of England. The elder statesmen of the Union Meeting House sought help of the Diocese of Pennsylvania toward an orderly place of worship under an established church. The first organizational meeting was convened on May 4, 1835, with the Rev. Mr. Ridgely presiding. St. Andrew's was organized under a charter of the Commonwealth and admitted into the Diocese of Pennsylvania in 1835. Ours was the fourth parish in Bucks County and the thirty-ninth admitted to the Diocese.

The name of the church was established and a vestry was nominated, including Messrs. William Paff, Amos Van Sant, Patterson Van Horn, Phineas Hough, Edward Nicholson, Sr., and Thomas Heed. At their second meeting, held on June 25, the minutes reveal "a subscription was made for the purpose of furnishing the church and 140s. was subscribed by the persons present."

Only legend brings a view of the Union Meeting House, which was to be furnished as a church "as soon as practicable." There were two entrances on Afton Avenue, no doubt one for men and one for women. There was a balcony above the entrances which ran across the Afton Avenue side of the building. The seats probably faced each other on the first floor, facing the center aisle. There was no pulpit or chancel so the need for "furnishings" was great.

At the June meeting, the Rev. Mr. Ridgely was asked to accept the rector's duties, in addition to his responsibilities in neighboring parishes. (His missionary efforts forged links which connected several churches. Rector Ridgely also "founded" Grace Church in Hulmeville in 1831 and St. Luke's, Newtown, in 1834.)

In July, 1835, the vestry approved a certificate for Mr. Thomas Heed "to collect money for said church." And for the first time, the name of a woman appeared in the records -- Mary Stewart became a "pew holder." A committee was appointed to lay an assessment on all the pews "which shall be arranged in four classes and average 6s. per pew." Mr. Heed took on the additional responsibility of selling family burial plots.

On October 3, 1836, Mr. Van Sant was appointed to purchase stoves for the church. Soon thereafter, Judge Brown was elected Senior Warden.

In the fall of 1836, our forefathers in the faith set themselves to "furnishing" the Union Meeting House to become St. Andrew's Church. From youthful conversations with those long since passed to their reward, Mr. Robert Belleville reconstructed just what this furnishing meant.

Picture in your mind's eye the size and shape of St. Andrew's Church today. Now remove the sanctuary and replace the east wall where it was, at the line of the present altar rail. Next, remove the partitions enclosing the present sacristy on the northeast corner and the organ loft on the southeast corner. Lower the floor of the choir to the level where the present pews stand. Raise the roof on the north and south sides until the building is two stories high, but open inside to the roof. The interior is a rectangle 35 feet by 50 feet. There are clear glass windows of 12 panes each. Upon entering either of the front doors, you would find that there was a balcony above you and on the east and west walls with narrow stairways giving access.

To "furnish" a proper Episcopal church, these changes were made. The pews along the north side were removed and a platform about 12 feet wide and 9 feet deep was raised two steps above floor level on the center of the north wall. An altar rail was placed on three sides thereof, not reaching the north wall, thus providing access on the platform at either end. A single step ran around three sides to provide a place for the congregation to kneel when receiving the Sacrament. This platform was furnished with a table (as an altar) and six matched, mahogany, Chippendale chairs, of which two were arm chairs for the bishop and the rector. The priest apparently celebrated from one side of the table, which was in the center of the platform. The chairs were against the north wall behind the table.

The pews were entirely rebuilt and all faced north to the "Sanctuary" platform, except for three which were on each side of the platform and which faced it. The pews were divided into sections by a middle and two side aisles, so all were the same size. They had doors to close on entering. No change appears to have been made in the balcony or its seating arrangements. The cost of all this work of furnishing was later recorded as $181.16 and difficulty was had over several years to meet the cost.

The hard-pressed Mr. Ridgely, who served so much of Bucks County, resigned in April, 1837, effective when a replacement could take over. The Rev. Mr. George Kirke was the new rector at a salary of 100s. per year. The salary was to be supplemented by his "found" - and he reported that, following most parish calls, his "found" might be a smoked ham, side of bacon, potatoes, sausage or cloth for his wife's use -- left discreetly to be "found" in his saddle bag. Here was an incentive to call on the parishioners — no call, no "found." Rector Kirke also served Grace Church, Hulmeville.

At a meeting of the vestry and rector on June 29, 1837, a letter, drafted by Rector Kirke, was approved for dispatch to the Rt. Rev. H. U. Onderdonk, D.D., Bishop of Pennsylvania, requesting him to consecrate the Church on the following Sunday. The letter was signed by all present and sent to the Bishop in Philadelphia.

Bishop Onderdonk, in his report to the diocese in 1838, said: "On 2nd July, 1837, I consecrated Grace Church, Hulmeville, and Saint Andrew's Church, Yardleyville. Both are neat and commodious edifices and the latter of considerable magnitude and very substantial. They owe their existence and enrollment on our lists and their promising condition to the active energies of our clerical brethren in those parts." He consecrated St. Andrew's Church "to the honor of God's Great Name -- separating it thenceforth from all unhallowed, ordinary and common uses, and dedicating it to His Services, for reading His Holy Word, for celebrating His Holy Sacraments, for offering to His Glorious Majesty the Sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving, for blessing His people in His Name, and for all other Holy Offices."

The building they did was not all stone, mortar, wood and paint. The report to the diocese for 1837 shows 104 services on Sundays, eight baptisms, three burials, four marriages, the addition of 12 communicants, about 50 families, some 60 Church School pupils, and eight teachers. Note that the population of Yardleyville at that time was about 400 persons.

St. Andrew's Church as we use it today is not just something that happened or was given by a benevolent diocese. Here is the fruit of the labors of the

generations of Church of Yardleyville men and women who came before us. Here was a faith — not only in the present, but a faith in the future because the little meeting house was larger than they needed. The things they planned and built were for their children and their children's children.

# Period of Growth

We come now to the season of growth at St. Andrew's, Yardleyville, a period of 51 years from 1838-1889.

At the outset, we had debts of about $181, a rector's salary of $100 per year, and a sexton's position at $14 per year . . . and no takers!

Then on February 20, 1838, the vestry held itself responsible to Mr. Courtlandt Yardley for $50 for the procurement of a bell for the Church, he agreeing to take a promise of payment thirty days later. By March 15, the bell was installed and for the succeeding years it has called the faithful to worship and tolled the dead to decent burial, rung the happy tidings of marriages and for several years called the valiant volunteers to the fighting of fires. It sang thankfully the end of the Civil War, the Spanish American War, World Wars I and II, and other times of conflict, celebrated the Nation's Bicentennial on July 4, 1976, and still serves today.

In April, Messrs. Nicholson and Yardley were appointed to build a tower for the bell.

Rector Kirke resigned, and there was some difficulty in finding a replacement. Finally, The Rev. Mr. A. Frederick Burnham, rector of St. Luke's in Newtown, agreed to serve St. Andrew's at an annual stipend of $150.

It seems however that the new rector and the new steeple arrived at about the same time, for at the June meeting bills for $179.70 for the latter were presented and totaled. It is notable that at the meeting also, the decision was made to put a fence along the back of the property and also to plant hitching posts. The parking problem had become acute!

As the years roll by, the records show one meeting a year of pew holders to elect a vestry which met immediately after. In June of 1842 Mr. Burnham resigned. In April 1843, Mr. Christian Wiltberger was engaged as rector to take services on alternate Sundays. At the same meeting, pew rents were raised to ten dollars and these were assigned to the rector as salary.

In October, 1843, the first prayer books were purchased for the church. Prior to that time, each family used their own books or their memories.

The first corporation seal was procured in 1844 (cost, $2.50). In the same year a building for the Sunday School was constructed through the energies and devotion of Mrs. Wiltberger, the rector's wife. It was of wood, one room with a loft and it occupied the site of the entrance to the present Parish House. It served until 1913 and there are still living parishioners who began their religious education in this tiny, white-washed school.

In November, 1845, the vestry leased the building to the school directors of the township — five months for ten dollars. During the period the educators were to build a school. In March, 1846, the vestry leased a part of the eastern end of the church grounds for school purposes — for fifty years at $20 a year. And so St. Andrew's fathered public education in our town.

In 1852, Mr. W. E. Webb was elected rector. Four years later he was succeeded by Mr. William Hommann.

During this period, Rector Hommann distributed a "broadside" flyer throughout the community, inviting residents to worship at St. Andrew's. The document featured the old engraving of the church building, modified by the addition of the

weathervane which had been added. (That weathervane hangs today in the Parish House.) The announcement opened with the notice: "All the seats in this church are free." Since most churches still used pew rental as a source of income at this time, the concept was rather radical. At St. Andrew's, the rector's salary was raised by subscription and incidental expenses were raised by weekly offerings, so no person has any exclusive right to any particular pew. The notice continued: "It is a House of Prayer for all people; and the ministrations of religion are here freely offered to all who will accept them. The Poor and the Stranger will always find a ready welcome. Residents of the village and country round about, and the wayfaring man are cordially invited."

The announcement noted a 9:15 a.m. Sunday School, Sunday service at 10:30, and at 3:00 p.m. Evening Prayer service held every other Sunday (a glorious Anglican tradition largely unknown today). On Thursdays, the Bible Class met. Holy Communion was offered at the first Sunday service every month and on special church days.

The tradition of wide participation in the singing and responses had already been established, as Father Hommann stressed that "all persons present at any of the Services in this Church are earnestly requested to join with heart and voice in the Responses, in the Chanting, and the Psalmody."

Services of the pastor were offered to "the sick and the afflicted, without regard to creed or circumstances. He will be happy to minister to the spiritual wants of all who have no church home or pastoral supervision elsewhere. And all persons in trouble, sorrow, need or any other adversity are kindly recommended to come to this House of God, that their burdens may be lightened by the consolations of religious worship, and by the sympathy of Christ's ministers and people."[Reprints of this flyer are available in the Church office.]

Disbursements continued to the needy. In December, 1856, $1.00 was contributed to a "poor and destitute stranger." November, 1858, $2.00, "contributed by the children" was sent to the African Mission. A number of payments were made to a fund "for infirm and disabled ministers." During the late 1850's and early 1860's, special weekly collections were taken "toward the minister's salary." Other frequent special collections were made for domestic missions and for contributions "to the mission to the Jews in Philadelphia."

The Civil War apparently brought difficult times to St. Andrew's. In 1864, Mr. Hommann reported that the past year had been "rather barren of either temporal or spiritual blessings. The calamitous state of the country and measures for its relief seem to have absorbed the time, thoughts and energies of the people; nor have the troubles and trials through which we are passing been sanctified to the prompting of them to seek for a better portion in a better world, except in a very few instances. We hope for better things to come."

In 1869, an argument with a neighbor arose concerning the property leased by the vestry to the school directors. It appears that the neighbor occupied the lot. Propositions and proposals appear in the minutes for years. It was the property of the neighbor but he had fenced it in to include the lot belonging to the church. The vestry attempted to buy the house in 1870. An offer of $50 was made for the land but was refused. Year after year the argument continued but after 1873 no further reference appears. Forty years were to pass by until the house was bought as a rectory.

On October 6, 1875 Mr. Abdiel Ramsey, then in Deacon's orders, was called to take the services at St. Andrew's Church. His stipend was five dollars per week. Times improved and in April, 1876, the treasurer of the parish reported that Mr. Ramsey was paid in full and had received an advance of ten dollars! The gentleman was ordained to the priesthood on April 14, 1879 when his stipend was placed on an annual basis of $250. But Rector Ramsey had concurrently been serving a church in Newtown. And alas, the St. Andrew's vestrymen were presented with a bill for one half of the taxes and repairs on the rectory of that church -- St. Luke's. Newtown.

The patience of the treasurer prevented open strife!

On April 14, 1879 there entered into the official life of St. Andrew's the first of the distaff side of the congregation, Miss Emma Howell. On that date she was elected treasurer of the parish. Never thereafter does she disappear from the annals nor is there ever a flagging of her energy, loyalty and faithfulness to her parish until our Master received her unto Himself.

At a vestry meeting on January 8, 1880, the Treasurer reported that all presented bills had been paid. For the first time the corporation was solvent. At the same meeting there was a motion "to replace the existing personal facilities -- the one now standing being a disgrace, to build a new one in the Spring."

In 1887, the important role of women in St. Andrew's was recognized when Miss Emma Howell, Mrs. J. T. Pursell, and Mrs. Joseph E. Smith were elected to the vestry. This however was quite premature — by more than 80 years. They were removed from office by the Bishop — by rule of Canon Law as it then stood.

# Rebuilding and Renewal

During this forward-thinking time, the vestry determined to build the Gothic church building which houses St. Andrew's worship today. Under the leadership of Rector Richard H. G. Osborne, work began in 1889 to erect the new building on the site of the old stone meeting house, with a portion of the solid walls of the original building incorporated into the new walls.

The June 17, 1890 consecration of the new building was reported in the Public Ledger. The newspaper reported: "The beautiful little edifice recently erected for St. Andrew's Protestant Episcopal Church of Yardley was consecrated this morning by the Right Reverend O. W. Whitaker, D.D., Bishop of the Diocese. There were carriages at the station to meet the different trains and convey the visitors to the church, about a mile distant.

"The floral decorations of the church were very fine. Bouquets of flowers were on the altar, a flower cross on the credence table, water lilies in the spirea on the font. The ledges of the windows were filled with palms and growing plants, ferns and banks of flowers. The Bishop was met at the entrance of the church by the church wardens and vestrymen. The Bishop and the clergy present went up the aisle to the altar repeating the 24th Psalm, alternately, the Bishop one verse and the clergy another. The request for consecration was read by Mr. Thomas C. Knowles, one of the vestrymen, and the sentence of consecration by the Rector, the Reverend Richard H. G. Osborne, M.D."

The report continued in part: "The sermon was preached by the Reverend Robert E. Dennison, Rector of St. Timothy's Church, Roxborough, from the text: 'But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth. Behold the Heaven, and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less this House I have built.'

" . . . The new edifice just completed . . . is constructed of Yardley brownstone from the vicinity. The roof is pointed to a ridge, and the building is surmounted by a bell tower. The seating capacity of the church is for 200 persons. . . . the large window in the rear of the altar, representing St. Andrew, was the gift of the Sunday School, as was also one of the side windows, in memory of Mrs. Hanna Skelton. There was also a window in memory of Mrs. Hanna M. Schuyler from her daughter, and a window presented by Calvary Church, Germantown. In the church is a sun dial, bearing the date 1832. The total cost of the building was upwards of $4,000. The architect was Isaac Pursell, the builder B. Frank Livezey, and the stained glass was from Alfred Godwin of Philadelphia. While the church was in process of erection, the congregation worshipped in the small Sunday School building on the premises."

The forty years of St. Andrew's Church life from 1890 when the new edifice was consecrated until 1930 were fraught with disappointment and poverty.

Doctor Osborne, the mender of bodies who had turned his talents to saving souls and had inspired the parish for eight years, resigned in 1891. The office of Rector was vacant for nearly two years. Serious consideration was given in this period to joining with Grace Church, Hulmeville.

In this period of doldrums, a young man was added to the vestry who became a stalwart soldier during an uninterrupted term of forty-two years. Perhaps St. Andrew's remains to us today because Jesse E. Harper devoted his whole self and much of his substance to preserve this House of God. The Parish House was his vision and labor. Our first rectory was his foresight and wisdom. The Chancel was never vacant for he was also a lay reader. For most of those years his devoted and talented wife labored at his side. For years afterward, their devotion was continued by the introduction of our children to Christian education by their tireless and charming daughter, Gladys Harper.

But back again to August, 1891. We find a call extended to Mr. Mabley which wasn't accepted. Mr. B. R. Philps was called in September but he refused the offer. However, at a special meeting near Thanksgiving 1892, Mr. Lewis K. Jackson was called as "resident rector." The stipend was $325 per annum. In addition, the Convocation of Germantown agreed to pay our rector at least $200 per year as a subsidy for work at St. Andrew's, plus perhaps $25 more for holding services at the Dolington Mission every two weeks. He, trusting soul, accepted on January 1, 1893.

A deal that had been on the stove for years finally came to the boiling point. Although the record is not too clear it is apparent that Mr. Edward Nicholson, Sr. had deeded another portion of cemetery land to the church with the understanding that he receive one-half of the income from lot sales. In March, 1894 an agreement was reached between the vestry and the heirs of Mr. Nicholson that all further interest of the estate in the land and its income would cease and thereafter the vestry were only bound to maintain the family plot in good repair "and paint the iron-railing fence when necessary."

In 1895, Rector Jackson resigned. And at the meeting of February 10, 1896, a sad action, forced by hard times, was taken. "Resolved that the vestry of St. Andrew's Yardley waives its right to elect a rector and request the Bishop of the Diocese to appoint its minister for so long a time as an appropriation to aid in support of its minister be asked. Resolved that the vestry of this parish requests that it be adopted as a Mission Station and that an appropriation for the support of its minister be made by the Convocation."

A parish for 59 years then became a mission station. Not until more than 30 years later did St. Andrew's resume parish status on the records of the Diocese.

On the 14th of July, 1896 Bishop Whitaker appointed the Rev. Mr. Joseph Wood, Jr., as priest to St. Andrew's as well as St. James, Eden (Langhorne). This gentleman created a chapter of the Daughters of the King (which began a full tradition of service to the parish including help to families in distress and purchasing or making essential items for the church), and obtained additional furnishings for the church and altar. Electric lights were installed in the Sunday School. He also introduced the idea of pledged giving through an envelope system such as we use today and he edited a local paper, "The St. Andrew's Call."

In 1906 negotiations began to lead to the purchase of the first rectory from the estate of Mrs. A. S. Cadwallader.

The ivy that twined its grace on the walls of the church for many years was planted in 1907. Originally this ivy overgrew the walls of Westminster Abbey in England. Rooted plants from there were brought to the Jamestown Colony in 1609 by Captain John Yardley, the master of the ship which transported the colonists from the old to the new world. In Virginia it was planted at the base of the first brick church and still grows on that ruin. A parishioner, visiting Jamestown in 1907, heard the story of the ivy and brought back cuttings from the same plant -- back to

Yardleyville, the settlement named for the Penn Grantee, William Yardley, of the same family as the Captain. (But in time, the ivy proved to be stronger than the handiwork of man, damaging the stained glass windows and threatening even the stone walls. In 1984, the ivy was removed to preserve the church building.)

Plans for a Parish House began in 1912 with discussions and a solicitation for funds. In 1914, the contract for construction was signed, with financing from contributions and a mortgage on the rectory. On November 12, 1918- just one day after the Armistice ending World War I - the Parish House was dedicated in a fitting ceremony by the Bishop and Rector Lloyd D. Rhodes. The edifice was named in memory of Grace Leslie Harper, deceased twin sister of Gladys Harper. How fitting that Gladys continued to teach Sunday School classes in the Parish House for so many years!

Under the rectorship of Father Rhodes, a number of distinctive practices (such as the Reserved Sacrament) were begun. Controversial, as Anglo Catholic practice at that time, many have perservered through the decades. St. Andrew's, while never a parish which declared loyalty to one party or another in the Church, has maintained a rich tradition in worship.

In 1929, the vestry approved the purchase of the Moller organ for $2,000. It continues to serve the parish today. Regrettably, we have no record of the choir or the organists over all these years. From the memory of some long-time parishioners, however, we know the names of a few. The Trimmer girls - Frances and Nellie - sang in the choir before 1900. Later on, the Kauffmanns — the father a bass, the mother and one daughter altos, and another daughter a soprano — were mainstays for many years. Most of the time, the organist was also choir director. Among those who performed this double duty were Nellie Eames and Helen Cook. In more recent years, the choir was directed by Mr. Harry Ambler and followed by Millicent DuBois. From the early 1930's through 1958, the organist was Mr. Victor Humbrecht, who carried additional responsibilities as a member of the vestry, secretary and warden.

The 1930's brought the Great Depression, and a full share of financial woes to the parish. After some debate, the Every Member Canvass was held in 1932, resulting in pledges of $1,785 and a meager budget. The rector was unpaid for two months, and the Dean of the Convocation of Germantown advised the parish that the rector's salary must take priority over other arrearages. The Convention agreed to lend St. Andrew's $275 to pay salary, and the church promised monthly payments if the bank reopened in the near future. In September, St. Andrew's became an "aided parish" and by the end of the year an additional $200 loan had been obtained from Trenton Trust.

But the strength of the parish remained. During 1934, the name "St. Andrew's Church of Yardley" was registered with the Pennsylvania Secretary of State. The Charter was revised and, in January 1935, St. Andrew's was again considered a parish and free to call its own rector.

Financial problems remained, of course. Rector Walter C. Pugh suggested closing the church building and Parish House for two months in 1936 as an economy measure — but the vestry concluded that there would be "more to be lost in many ways than would be saved financially."

Rector Pugh was a very scholarly man who served on the Diocesan Board of Examining Chaplains. He was a familiar figure on Yardley streets, walking through the shopping area dressed in black and deep in thought. During his tenure, in 1937, St. Andrew's celebrated the centennial of its consecration. On that special occasion, the old morality play "Everyman" was presented, with numerous events including performance of a cantata, parish supper and bazaar, and a visit from Bishop Francis M. Taitt.

In 1938, the vestry voted to pay the rector's salary in full, and to restore St. Andrew's to full parish status while receiving help from the Sustenation Fund.

On November 15, 1939, Rector Pugh suggested inviting a woman to sit on the vestry. After considerable discussion, Mrs. Robert Belleville was elected parish treasurer in May, 1940, but not permitted to have a seat on the vestry or to vote.

# Postwar Growth and Change

The heavy impact of World War II began at St. Andrew's with vestry decisions to buy a larger coal bin (to stock reserves for heating church buildings) and a donation to assist military chaplains. The sudden absence of members for military service was felt promptly in both spiritual and financial aspects of parish life. Pledges of those who went to war were, of course, waived. The high cost of many necessities and the absence of some members was coupled with the unexpected need to replace a roof, buy a new heater and rewire the Church, Parish House and Rectory. Financial considerations compelled St. Andrew's to require aid from the Diocese for a number of years.

But despite financial problems, St. Andrew's demonstrated its commitment to the war effort, with modest but frequent contributions to the Army and Navy Commission of the Episcopal Church, to help establish a chaplain and recreational facilities for servicemen passing through Philadelphia, for British Missions, and the War Commission of the Diocese of Pennsylvania. The vestry authorized a fund drive to help rebuild churches, missions, schools and hospitals destroyed during the war in China, the Phillipines, and other mission fields. And, a contribution was made to help maintain an Episcopal Consciencious Objectors organization.

Throughout the war, parishioners in military service received word from home through the "Parish Letter," written every week by the rector. The May 28, 1944 issue emphasized: "Wherever you are, whenever we pray, there is the fellowship established." And at St. Andrew's, that fellowship was fostered by a program of constant prayer each day, from 5:30 a.m. to midnight, as individuals and families accepted the responsibility of praying during specific quarter-hour periods. The newsletter advised servicemen: ". . . whenever during our day. . . you send up a prayer, someone here will be praying with you, perhaps in the Church, probably at home or in the train, somewhere -- so that you and he or she or they will be united in prayer." Those in military service were also remembered in special Wednesday evening services when "each of your names are mentioned before God's Altar."

In return, servicemen wrote to the parish. Most of the letters were short, due to obvious time constraints and military censors. One soldier wrote: "They tell you not to write this and not to write that, and by the time they are finished, they leave you with the one remaining choice, the weather."

In 1945, the Church bell was tolled to mark the passing of President Franklin Roosevelt, and a special memorial was offered at the Sunday services.

The long history of coal heat finally ended in 1945, with the decision to purchase an oil burner now that such fuel was no longer rationed.

In January, 1946, the Service League announced that it would begin sponsoring a "sitter for young children through the ages of 5 years in order that fathers and mothers may attend the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday." This was just one of the efforts of the Service League to benefit the parish. The Service League was comprised of laymen and women to promote activity in church life through regular attendance, receiving new members, reviving interest, and raising funds for church needs. The organization assisted with expenses of the bulletin, provided a breakfast to encourage fellowship and early Communion, and sponsored a number of social events each year.

On January 21, 1946, Rector Dr. Walter Pugh suffered a heart attack at the Church House in Philadelphia. After a lengthy illness, he died in Massachusetts on June 6, 1946. During the period of his illness, Mr. Victor J. Humbrecht, Jr., the rector's warden, assumed many administrative responsibilities and substitute priests visited the parish on Sundays to conduct services.

On September 8, 1946, The Rev. Mr. William B. Stimson, a recently-discharged army chaplain, conducted services at St. Andrew's. The following week, the vestry voted to advise the Bishop that it was in unanimous agreement to call him to serve as rector. He was a tall, robust man, whose informal personality reflected his background as a military chaplain. He preferred to be addressed as "Father Bill," a title which had been favored by servicemen. He had entered the priesthood relatively late in life, and he loved the calling to serve the Church. He is remembered as a warm, generous and social man.

Under Father Stimson, a long and loving relationship was begun with the Order of the Holy Cross. Originally the men went to Holy Cross, and the women to St. Mary's in Peekskill. In recent years, retreats have been an annual event for both sexes at Holy Cross. Several members of the Parish have been associates of the Order and members of the Order have visited Yardley many times.

In April, 1949, the vestry determined that the outside doors of the church and the sacristy and parish house should be painted "cardinal red." The motion passed, and the tradition continues to this day.

In August, 1949, the vestry agreed to permit the Pennsbury School District to use the first floor of the church school for conducting classes, continuing a tradition of the church's cooperation with the school district.

The Women of St. Andrew's auxiliary initiated a parish lending library in 1950. (It was revitalized in 1983.)

In May, 1951, the four gothic lanterns which light the church were dedicated as memorials.

In mid-1952, the availability of the McCormick home on West Afton Avenue for purchase as a rectory became a major issue of concern. In June, parishioners voted 51-8 to purchase the property, but financial arrangements were difficult and there was not complete agreement that the rectory should be bought. At a special parish meeting on December 29, 1952, a resolution was approved by a 35-22 vote which directed the vestry to "proceed at once to enter into negotiations" for purchase of the home. The controversy continued, with some vestry members resigning, before a December 31, 1952 meeting at which the vestry voted 4-1 to proceed with the purchase of the property.

The Parish House was used by the Pennsylvania National Guard in 1955 during clean-up operations after a devastating flood brought wide damage in the Yardley area.

On June 27, 1956, an addition to the cemetery, donated by the Cold Spring Bleachery adjacent to the church, was consecrated by Bishop Armstrong. The new portion of the cemetery proved to be popular, with 14 spaces being paid in full by September, and 8 additional spaces being paid on time.

In 1958, Mr. Richard Averre took on responsibilities as organist and choir director, and added to the Church's musical heritage by composing many songs of worship. He was to serve for most of the next 17 years.

In 1962, "Father Bill" Stimson retired, although he later served a parish in New England for several years. At his request, he was buried in the St. Andrew's cemetery. Today, his wife Florence lives in Doylestown.

Mr. George B. Davison was called to serve as the new rector.

In 1963, Bishop J. Gillespie Armstrong authorized Rector Davison to "use a lay reader to read the Epistle, and have the alms and oblations presented by the laity, and the chalice and paten prepared at the Chancel steps, and to have the congregation recite the Prayer of Humble Access."

In July, 1964, the vestry accepted an offer to demolish the old rectory (which had been used for Sunday School classes for several years) at no cost to the church. Today. that site is used as our parking area.

On September 14, 1964, the day school opened its doors to children of members of the parish and the community. The issue had been discussed since at least June, 1947, so the "official opening" brought long-awaited joy.

On September 18-19, 1964, the vestry held a special two-day planning session. During the discussions, the "strong points" at St. Andrew's were listed. These included larger participation of all parishioners in church activities, greater participation by youth, considerable increase in membership, establishment of the nursery school, an "improved, healthy, and interesting church school curricula," and a "very warm and friendly atmosphere throughout St. Andrew's." Areas of concern included "too few workers carrying too much of a workload," inadequate finances, the need for improved communication, insufficient interest in community activities, the need for greater publicity, and the need to plan for capital funds. The vestry discussed a number of opportunities for improving areas of weakness and continuing areas of strength.

The parish's needs for additional space were met with the purchase of property from the Sarah Cadwallader estate for $36,000. The house and grounds provided an exceptional opportunity, located adjacent to the existing Rectory. Hard work by many parishioners enabled "St. Andrew's House" to officially open its doors in time for Sunday School classes in September, 1964. The new property was dedicated on October 25, 1964.

Although women were still not permitted to serve on the vestry, a number of organizations continued to serve the church in many ways. In 1965, for example, the Women of St. Andrew's organization conducted monthly meetings, assisted in many community events, and contributed $500 to finance renovation of the church organ. The Junior Daughters of the King made gifts for residents at the Maple Manor Nursing Home, including plants, flags, cards, and fruit. The group also assisted with taking care of the altar, helped with church social functions, and held a special communion service. The St. Andrew's Junior and Senior Girl's Friendly Society prepared placemats, napkins, and favors for the Maple Manor Nursing Home on many holidays, conducted a corporate communion, and collected Christmas cards to be used as religious cards and Christmas tags at the New Jersey State Hospital. They also prepared Christmas cards for nursing home patients and made items to be placed in booklets for the children's wards at hospitals, while contributing to a number of mission and scholarship funds. The Senior Daughters of the King worked on the Altar Guild, conducted numerous meetings, arranged for one church service a month to be held in the Maple Manor Nursing Home, conducted parties and dinners for individuals who were leaving the parish, sent delegates to major events, and reported sending 100 letters to the sick, 300 cards to the ill, 250 bouquets and plants to the sick, 275 calls to shut-ins, and some 2,000 calls to those in hospitals. The St. Margaret's Altar Guild continued to prepare the altar, linens, brass, candles, crosses, and Baptismal font in readiness for every service.

Meanwhile, efforts to secure permission to elect women to the vestry continued unabated. On January 17, 1966, the vestry unanimously resolved to petition the Diocesan Convention for permission to elect women to serve.

In November, 1966, the rector suddenly abandoned the parish. The Rev. Mr. William Mills from the Church of the Incarnation in Morrisville offered to assist in handling emergency needs, parishioners came forward and priests from neighboring parishes offered aid. During this difficult time, the vestry was pleased to note that "no service has gone without a fine pulpit supply." When the priest who was scheduled to conduct the Christmas day service was quite literally snowed in at his farm, "Bill Wisnon did an excellent job conducting the Christmas day service as a lay reader." Despite the inclement weather, 15 people participated in the service.

On January 23, 1967, Bishop Robert DeWitt attended the parish meeting to demonstrate his support, and on February 14, 1967, the vestry elected to call Mr. Frank T. Griswold, III, of Bryn Mawr as rector. On April 11, 1967, the vestry offered a standing ovation and a special vote of thanks to Paul Comegys, who served as rector's warden, for his "tireless and devoted attention to the interest of the parish . . . during the period when we were without a rector."

Father Griswold led St. Andrew's through changing times and changing liturgy. He was a warm and personable rector, apparently just as comfortable in jeans and a lumberman's shirt as in clerical attire. He is, perhaps, best remembered for his energetic approaches to bringing innovations in worship to St. Andrew's over the period of his tenure. Under his guidance, a new "family service" was instituted, where children were especially welcomed and where lay participation was (for the times) almost shocking. He conceived much of the liturgy which remains the hallmark of our 9:15 Sunday worship. He worked closely with Organist Richard Averre, who wrote original music to fit the words selected by Father Griswold for new songs. An air of spontaneity marked this period; often, the rector would telephone the organist with words for a new song, the organist would prepare the music at home, and Marcia Averre would sing the fresh composition at the next Sunday's service. As the new liturgy and music evolved, texts appeared in the "green book" binders -- a tradition which continues today.

Innovations included intercessions presented by members of the congregation, gifts of bread and wine for the Holy Communion, rearrangement of Church furnishings to permit "gathering around God's Table," and "Coffee Hour" lectures and discussions for adults during the time when children were in Sunday School. Today, these aspects of St. Andrew's worship are favored elements of our Sunday services for many parishioners; few would have speculated on such popularity when the "family service" began with the first 10 or 15 people in attendance.

In June, 1967, the vestry discussed the deteriorating condition of the stained glass window above the altar, which had been severely damaged by weather and the widespread growth of ivy. Ultimately, the window was removed. For a number of years it was replaced by three small, clear-glass windows. The present stained glass windows, given in memory of Natalie Peace Whitman and Janet Sheffer, were dedicated in 1983.

In September, 1968, the vestry held a special meeting to review the accomplishments of St. Andrew's and to plan greater activities in the future. The theme of "Christ in the Neighborhood" had been suggested to instill interest and vitality in the parish. The broad areas of goals for the parish which were set that day included involvement of as many people as possible, better communications, stewardship, personal responsibility, Christian education, and a meaningful liturgy. As part of the discussion, minutes note, "It was generally agreed that the church charter limiting the vestry to only male membership was out of date and should be changed to permit women on the vestry." Two vestry members were asked to determine what was necessary to amend the charter. The October 8, 1968 vestry minutes report Mr. Ralph Yardley's belief that, in order to change the by-laws, it would be necessary to go to court in Doylestown. The minutes also report his view, however, that if the vestry desired to add women, action should proceed since he questioned the validity of the by-laws in view of recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings concerning discrimination against women.

At the November 10, 1968 meeting, the vestry voted to amend the documents and, in the meantime, to appoint Mrs. Percy Smith to the vestry to fill an unexpired term. Mrs. Smith participated on the vestry until the unexpired term concluded in January, 1969. Mrs. Richard Averre was formally nominated by the Nominating Committee, and she and other nominees were unanimously elected to the vestry at the parish meeting on January 13, 1969.

The Women's Exchange opened in 1968. The Exchange continues to serve both St. Andrew's and the community to this day.

In 1970, George Nakashima was retained to submit several alternative proposals for interior reconstruction of the church. His suggestions were influential in the decision to rearrange Church furnishings, and several of his handmade furnishings are used in worship today.

The vestry had been concerned about the deteriorating condition of the cemetery wall adjoining Afton Avenue since 1950. The stone wall was being damaged, the vestry believed, by the constant rumbling of traffic. But at the September, 1970 meeting of the vestry, it was reported that the Pennsylvania Highway Department "refused to admit responsibility for the collapse of the stone wall," an unhappy circumstance which has continued to this day.

St. Andrew's continued efforts to assist in the community and the state. A number of parishioners spent an early December weekend assisting residents of Wilkes Barre to recover from a devastating flood. The vestry voted to contribute the Thanksgiving offering to assist in the relief effort.

The vestry devoted its organizational meeting in January, 1974 to a review of the aims and needs of the parish which were suggested by the congregation at an adult study period. After reviewing all of these ideas, the vestry determined that there was a need for more families to become involved in the activities of the parish. And, there was a desire to reach outside the parish family to share our blessings and commitment. The vestry decided to establish a number of commissions, each to be headed by a member of the vestry who would be responsible for the implementation of the work. Other members of the parish family would be invited to serve in active leadership through Commission service. Commissions included memorials, outreach, stewardship and canvass, youth, worship, ushering and hospitality, education, buildings and grounds, finance and communication.

In early 1974, Father Griswold announced that he would accept a call to be rector of St. Martin's Church in Chestnut Hill, Pennsylvania. In the months which followed, the vestry established qualifications to be considered in the selection of a new rector. The vestry developed a profile of St. Andrew's Church at the time, which included:

- Caring community open to growth and new discovery.
- Sunday experience with weekly relevance . . . .
- Special celebrations — Seder supper, Easter vigil, Epiphany house blessing, and others.
- Weekday small groups pursuing prayer and reflection, Bible studies, etc. Home Eucharist celebrations are being requested by the people, rather than the priest.
- Creative and innovative music program with musical styles ranging from traditional to contemporary. The receptive congregation is willing to learn new music and then to SING.
- Varied and vital community offering a variety of talents within the congregation.
- Enthusiastic and knowledgeable Liturgical Committee.
- Warm and human congregation with a strong sense of a family relationship in Christ.

At the time, the church noted the lack of full-time secretarial help, the transient nature of the parishioners (with an average stay of two to five years), and the need for heavy building maintenance responsibilities. The church had 356 communicants, with an average of 186 persons attending each Sunday. One hundred and forty children were enrolled in the church school, and staff in addition to the rector included a sexton, organist, part-time secretary, treasurer and bookkeeper. Property included the Church, Rectory, Parish House, St. Andrew's House (which housed the Church school, rector's office, thrift shop, Women's Exchange, sexton's living quarters, and the parish office), and unheated carriage house and sewing room.

On September 16, 1974, the vestry unanimously accepted the recommendation of the Search Committee, and called The Rev. Edward B. Gammons as rector. The vestry voted its special appreciation to The Rev. Mr. Sam Smith for his assistance in conducting services during the absence of a rector.

## Today and the Future

Since 1974, under the guidance and leadership of the Rev. Edward B. Gammons, Jr., St. Andrew's has continued its commitment to the challenge of the call of the Church. New programs in Christian Education, Outreach and Worship have been established and developed.

Active lay participation in Sunday School and the Adult Coffee Hour has strengthened Christian Education. The development of a new curriculum has ensured the growth of the entire parish family. A commitment to Outreach has made possible St. Andrew's involvement in local community, diocesan and national church programs. And the liturgy of worship on both Sundays and weekdays has continued to grow and evolve to serve the needs of the people of the parish.

In 1984, a new Youth Program is in place; a series of seminars in Bible study, Christian Mysticism and other areas of interest are also in place. Carolyn Belle Lyday continues her able ministry as Student Assistant to the Rector.

We go forward with a sense of the tradition of Christian worship and fellowship as it has been experienced in this Church for over 150 years. We go forward in 1984 as a community of loving people with a knowledge that we have been richly blessed by our Father; we struggle to make a responsible commitment in our lives and to share a life of faith with others. We go forward with a sense of our mission to the family of God here in this place and in the world beyond these walls.

# St. Andrew's Rectors

| | |
|---|---|
| 1835 - 1837 | Greenberry W. Ridgely |
| 1837 - 1840 | George Kirke |
| 1840 - 1842 | Richard Frederick Burnham |
| 1842 - 1852 | Christian Wiltberger |
| 1852 - 1856 | W. E. Webb |
| 1856 - 1866 | William Homman |
| 1867 - 1867 | J. W. Leadenham<br>(May 20 - July 25, 1867) |
| 1867 - 1872 | J. Preston Fugett |
| 1872 - 1874 | William Simonton Cochrane |
| 1875 - 1881 | Deacon Abdiel Ramsey<br>(Ordained 1879) |
| 1881 - 1883 | James R. Duganne |
| 1883 - 1891 | Richard H. G. Osborne |
| 1891 - 1893 | (Without a rector) |
| 1893 - 1896 | Lewis H. Jackson |
| 1896 - 1906 | Joseph Wood, Jr. |
| 1907 - 1911 | Charles B. Williams |
| 1912 - 1915 | William C. Emhart |
| 1915 - 1917 | Lloyd Dexter Rhodes |
| 1917 - 1920 | J. A. Stewart |
| 1920 - 1922 | Thomas A. Merryweather |
| 1922 - 1935 | Francis B. Barnett |
| 1935 - 1945 | Walter Cresson Pugh |
| 1946 - 1962 | William B. Stimson |
| 1962 - 1966 | George B. Davison |
| 1967 - 1974 | Frank T. Griswold, III |
| 1974 - | Edward B. Gammons, Jr. |